

# Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants Request for Proposals (RFP)

## Overview

The State of Georgia's FY 2015 budget includes funding to support a new USG initiative, [Affordable Learning Georgia](#) (ALG), which focuses on reducing the costs of textbooks and the enhancement of [GALILEO](#), Georgia's Virtual Library and ALG's parent initiative. A key strategy is to provide grant-supported opportunities for USG faculty, libraries, and institutions to transform their use of textbooks and other learning materials into lower cost options. The Affordable Learning Georgia Textbook Transformation Grants are intended to:

1. Pilot different approaches in USG courses for textbook transformation including adoption, adaptation, and creation of Open Educational Resources (OER) and/or identification and adoption of materials already available in GALILEO and USG libraries.
2. Provide support to faculty, libraries, and their institutions to implement these approaches.
3. Lower the cost of college for students and contribute to their retention, progression, and graduation.

This initial call covers thirty grant awards to be made to support adoption and use of no- or low-cost learning materials in USG courses in Spring semester 2015 in amounts of \$10,800 each, in three categories: No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials, OpenStax Textbooks, and Course Pack Pilots. All USG institutions, libraries, and faculty are eligible and encouraged to submit proposals. A maximum of three per campus will be awarded in this round.

Other planned calls include (1) another round in these three categories to be announced in January 2015 for award in April 2015 and deployment in Fall semester 2015 and (2) a call for proposals for department-wide course(s) OER/no-cost-to-students adoptions/adaptations/creations, to be announced in mid-Fall 2014.

For more about Affordable Learning Georgia and the impact that textbook price can have on student success see: <http://www.affordablelearninggeorgia.org>

## Description of Awards

Funding is available in three categories of projects, with up to 10 per category to be awarded. Proposals can address any course; proposals that address courses in the [Top 50 USG Lower-Division Courses](#) are encouraged.

Proposals can be submitted in three categories.

### **1. No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials**

Proposals in this category will address faculty replacing their existing textbook in a specific course with no-cost-to-students learning materials. No-Cost-to-Students Learning Materials can include but are not limited to the following:

- Adoption, adaptation, and/or creation of Open Textbooks. Open textbooks are widely available and used and have been adopted by several USG organizations including eCore, saving students thousands of dollars in textbook costs.
- Adoption, adaptation, and/or creation of other Open Educational Resources.
- Adoption of materials already available in [GALILEO](#) and USG libraries.
- Any of these in combination.

There are many online sites that offer OER and Open Textbooks, including: [MERLOT](#), [Open Stax Connexions](#), [Open Textbook Library](#), and [College Open Textbooks](#). Adoptions of open textbooks from OpenStax will be considered in category 2 of the Transformation Grants.

All materials must be fully available online at no cost to students. Provision of an additional option to pay-for-print is acceptable if the cost is at least 50% less than the existing textbook.

### **2. OpenStax Textbooks**

The University System is a member of the [OpenStax College](#), which offers students free textbooks that meet scope and sequence requirements for most courses. These are peer-reviewed texts written by professional content developers. Several USG institutions are already working on adopting these texts with positive results, including 2013-14 use of the [OpenStax Biology textbook at UGA](#) via a 2013 [USG Complete College Georgia Incubator Grant](#). Faculty can adopt a book for a turnkey classroom solution or modify it to suit their individual teaching approach. Free online and low-cost in print, OpenStax College books are built for today's student budgets. OpenStax Textbook adoption grants are designed to support faculty driven work required for adoption of a specific textbook for a specific course. Proposals in this category will address faculty replacing their existing textbook in a specific course with an adoption/ adaptation of an OpenStax College open textbook.

### **3. Course Pack Pilots**

Proposals in this category will address faculty replacing their existing textbook or existing course pack in a specific course with a library-supported course pack. Materials in the course pack can include OER, commercially available materials already licensed for the institution by GALILEO and USG

libraries, and commercially available materials in which copyright permissions are cleared for a fee. ALG is hoping to do this in partnership with one or more clearance providers, to include review of GALILEO/library e-subscriptions to ensure no fees are paid for materials that are already licensed for use by the institution. ALG is interested in proposals that would explore multiple clearance fee recovery models, including ALG-funded, institution-funded, and student-funded. Partnership with college stores for print delivery is also encouraged.

## **Funds and Required Activities**

Funding is intended to cover the faculty/staff release time and expenses. Proposals should involve teams of two faculty members, two faculty members including a librarian (Course Pack Pilots), or one faculty member and an instructional designer. Awards will provide \$5000 for release time/salary per team member for each of up to two team members for a maximum of \$10,000 total plus \$800 for overall project expenses, including travel. Expected activities include training in the chosen project resources, open licensing as necessary, and any textbook creation or adaptation required. Project plans should address review, selection, and creation of the materials, course/instructional design/redesign, two status reports, and the intended methodology for assessment/data collection. Proposals should identify the specific course, the existing textbook to be replaced, cost of the existing textbook, the title, technology and cost of the replacement to be used, the expected number of students to benefit, the expected plan of action (e.g., identification, adoption/adaptation, syllabus redesign, course redesign, instructional design, etc.), and possible measures of impact on student success and experience. Letters of support must be provided from the sponsoring area (unit, office, department, school, library, campus office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs etc.) that will be responsible for receipt and distribution of funding. Letters should reference sustainability.

## **Process**

As indicated in the grant descriptions, the Office of Academic Affairs (VPAA), specific unit, office, department, school, or library must serve as the sponsor for proposals and receipt of funding. While any institution is welcome to submit multiple proposals, a maximum of three projects can be funded for each USG institution, with a maximum of 30 to be awarded in total.

Funding will be released to the sponsoring institutional office in two parts: 50% on receipt of a simple contractual timeline tied to deliverables with the original or modified proposal serving as the statement of work, and 50% on submission of the final report (June 1 for Spring 2015).

Proposals (not to exceed 4 pages) will be evaluated on the feasibility and reasonableness of the action plan and adherence to the proposal guidelines

according to the linked rubric. Follow-up questions or interviews may be requested of applicants. Announcement of grantees is expected no later than September 28, 2014. Awardees will be required to submit a project timeline tied to deliverables along with the original or modified proposal serving as the statement of work. Please note that awardees' applications will be made available to all USG institutions.

Team members will participate in facilitated project initiation processes, including online and up to 2 in-person meetings for review of processes, timelines, and training on content as needed for grant category. Teams will complete a mid-point status report form online and a final written report, to include requested measures of impact on student success and experience as well as any other elements provided in final report template. Teams will be expected to be available for information sharing about their experience in future ALG information sessions, in the ALG newsletter and other publications, on the ALG website, and in related presentations and materials.

Institutional sponsors will be responsible for fund disbursement, including expense and travel reimbursement. Budgets will be supported by State funds and therefore institutions spending project money must ensure compliance with State, BOR and institutional policies and procedures.

### **Information Required / Proposal Guidelines**

The [Affordable Learning Georgia](#) website provides many resources and tools to find Open Textbooks, Open Educational Resources, and materials in GALILEO and USG libraries.

**Download [Proposal Form](#)**

**Download [Proposal Evaluation Rubric](#)**

Information needed includes:

- Completed [Proposal Form](#)
- Letter of Support from the sponsoring area (unit, office, department, school, library, campus office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs etc.) that will be responsible for receipt and distribution of funding. Letters should reference sustainability.

All proposal documents, references, and attachments should be submitted in a single email to [alg@gatech.edu](mailto:alg@gatech.edu) by 5:00 PM, EST, September 8, 2014.

# Timeline

## 2014

- August 7: Release of RFP
- August 14-15: Webinar(s) for RFP Review, Q and A
- **September 8: All proposal documents, references, and attachments should be submitted in a single email to [alg@gatech.edu](mailto:alg@gatech.edu) by 5:00 PM, EST, September 8, 2014.**
- September 9-25: Evaluation of proposals and final decisions
- September 28: Notifications to Submitters
- After September 28: First disbursement, on receipt of a simple contractual timeline tied to deliverables with the original or modified proposal serving as the statement of work
- September 28-November 26: Facilitation of project initiation processes, in three cohorts by category, including online and up to 2 in-person meetings for review of processes, timelines, and training on content as needed for category (OER, open-licensing, OpenStax, course pack vendor and fee models, etc.)
- September 28-December 19: Implementation processes by grant recipients
- December 19: First status report

## 2015

- January 2015: Production release in USG course of grant-produced content and attendant course redesign
- June 1: Deadline for final report